



# TOWN OF GROTON

## GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



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### **Members of the Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly**

Senator Cathy Osten, Senator Paul Formica, and Representative Toni Walker, Tri-Chairs

**Subject:** Restoration of Funding for the Connecticut Humanities Council Inc. within the budget of the Department of Economic & Community Development

**Submitted by:** Betty Anne Reiter, Director of Library Services, Groton Public Library

**Date:** February 13, 2017

I am writing to support CT Humanities and the opportunities it provides for hundreds of local initiatives and organizations, like the Groton Public Library, which contribute significantly to the state's economic health, vibrancy and quality of life. Please restore the \$1.73 million appropriation for CT Humanities that was included in the state budget approved by the legislature in 2016, but later removed by line-item veto after the budget was passed.

The Groton Public Library and the residents of southeastern Connecticut have been enriched by the programs made possible by grants received in recent years. Most memorably, through CT Humanities, our Library hosted the Smithsonian exhibit, *The Way We Worked*, and brought this professional museum exhibit to our residents, young and old, who may never have the opportunity to visit the Smithsonian. We also tied the exhibit in to our local workforce when we received an additional CT Humanities grant that allowed us to capture oral histories of Electric Boat workers during The Cold War. These stories were again featured in 2016 as part of Groton's celebration of Connecticut's Submarine Century.

Two of our librarians participated in StEPs-CT (Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations) from 2015 through 2017 with funding provided by CT Humanities. This 26-month program of professional development, facilitated conversation and mentorship is based upon a curriculum of best practices developed by the American Association for State and Local History. The training coincided with the expansion of both the Library's local history collection and local history room and helped ensure that funding provided through a State Library Public Library Construction Grant was spent effectively.

"SUBMARINE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"

The Library has also sponsored a community reading project—*One Book, One Region*—for the past 14 years and funding from CT Humanities has helped the program thrive. Our readers, high school age and above, benefit from the thematic programs and the opportunity to meet the author. In addition, we have hosted *READY for the Grade*, a four-session series for elementary age students and their caregivers to encourage reading readiness.

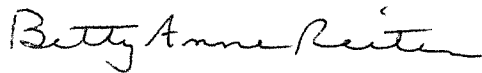
This spring, the Library is collaborating with CT Humanities on a series of programs based on the NEH initiative, *Humanities and the Legacy of Race and Ethnicity in the United States*. This will allow the Library to continue programming initiated last year promoting community conversations about race, justice, human rights and compassion.

CT Humanities programming promotes lifelong learning, civic health, and helps preserve our state's rich history. This state expenditure adds immeasurably to Connecticut's economy, generating matching funds and engaging many thousands of visitors and volunteers of all ages. An economic study has shown that more than 5,000 jobs are supported and 22,000 volunteers are engaged by these initiatives.

Please reinstate the state funding for this valuable organization.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty Anne Reiter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Betty Anne Reiter